

# PHOTOGRAPHING THE SHINKANSEN: FUKUYAMA & TOKUYAMA

Christopher P. Hood

While the frequency of trains along the Sanyo Shinkansen is not as great at the Tokaido Shinkansen, meaning longer waits between shots, there is a much greater variation in rolling stock. There are a number of good photo spots along the line. In this article I will discuss two of these; Fukuyama and Higashi-Hiroshima.



Fukuyama provides an excellent opportunity to get a shot of a shinkansen with a castle in the background. Although the line is elevated in the city, the city provides the solution to this potential problem for photographers. In most Japanese cities you will find multi-storey car-parks near stations. Access to these is easy (though remember that those affiliated to shops will generally not open until 10 a.m.) and you will usually not be disturbed there. The car park at Fukuyama is on the South side of the station and a few hundred metres in the Hiroshima direction. As it is only

a narrow road's distance from the line, it is possible to get a good photograph without the need for a long zoom. Also the view is good enough to give you plenty of time to prepare your camera (even when a 500-series shinkansen passes through), and is large enough to allow you to get photographs from various heights and angles.





Map taken from <http://www.its-mo.com/z.htm?m=E133.21.49.312N34.29.11.06&l=9>

Moving west along the Sanyo Shinkansen, another 'car-park' stop is Tokuyama (now in Shunan City). The main features of photographs here are; that due to the curve in the track, all trains pass through the station relatively slowly, making it easier to get the train in focus; second, the background of oil refineries and the like, while not as attractive as the Seto Inland Sea which has become obscured by these structures, certainly provide an element of interest – particularly at dusk when their lights come on and the flames from some of the chimneys stand out more. The car-park itself is on the East side of the station and about five minutes walk in the Hiroshima direction.





Map taken from <http://www.its-mo.com/z.htm?m=E131.48.32.554N34.2.48.651&l=8>

Happy photographing!

Published as 'Photographing the Shinkansen (Part 2): Fukuyama and Tokuyama', *Japanese Railway Society Bulletin*, Issue 58 (April – June 2006) (2006), 27-8.